An Expert Committee headed by Dr. D. V. Kapoor, former Secretary, Heavy Industry is examining the Turn Around Plan (TAP) submitted by Heavy Enginering Corporation (HEC) for its revival. The Committee, in its interim recommendations, has recommended as under:—

(i) Release of Rs. 66.60 crores for arranging urgent inputs, part payment of outstanding bills and customs duty etc.

(ii) Assistance in securing orders from major customers like SAIL, Railways and VSP.

(iii) 50 per cent excise and 100 per cent sales tax remission for 1992-93 and 1993-94 to be allowed as interest free loan to be paid in five yearly equal instalments commencing 1994-95.

(iv) Waiver of electricity duty till 1995-96.

(v) Cutting down of fixed costs including administrative and maintenance costs on township; and

(vi) Further VRS in 1992-93 for 2000 more persons, etc.

Supply of rationed foodgrains to income-tax payers

*236. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it has been proposed to deny rationed foodgrains at subsidised rates to the people who are income-tax payers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government would reconsider this decision to give foodgrains through fair price shops by reducing the quantum instead of denying them outrightly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c) The Central Government has not taken any decision to deny rationed foodgrains at subsidised rates to the people who pay income-tax. The Public Distribution System (PDS) at present is universal in character and does not distinguish the beneficiaries based on income, occupation etc. While the Central Government is responsible for procurement, storage and transportation of PDS items, and making them available at Central Issue Prices to the State Governments/UT Administrations, the implementation of PDS is done by the States/Uts. Decisions regarding inter-district allocations, opening of fair price shops, scale of entitlement and periodicity of availability etc. are taken by the State Governments/UT Administrations. They may decide on entitlements to different classes of peoples based on criteria of their income, assets owned etc.

Setting up of South Asian Development Fund

*237. SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of India has agreed to set up a South Asian Development Fund; and

(b) if so, what are the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) The 11th Session of SAARC Council of Ministers which met at Colombo on July 8-9 has directed that a reasibility study be undertaken to examine the possibilities of mobilising global surpluses for regional development in South Asia, given the region's own resource constraints.

(b) The detailed Terms of Reference of the Study have still to be drawn up.